

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, FR
SUBJECT: SOLAR ENERGY AGENCY: A REMOTE IDEA AT PRESENT

1. FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD, IN INTERVIEW APPEARING
IN LE MONDE AFTERNOON WED. JAN 25 (DATED JAN 26)
ANNOUNCED (FREE TRANSLATION): QUOTE. DEVELOPING
NEW FORMS OF ENERGY. IN THIS FIELD, AS WELL, FRANCE
IS AMONG THE LEADING COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD. SOLAR
ENERGY IN PARTICULAR IS ONE WHICH IS GOING TO BECOME
VERY IMPORTANT. THAT IS WHY WE PLAN TO ESTABLISH A
SOLAR ENERGY AGENCY (COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE SOLAIRE)

WHICH WILL COORDINATE EFFORTS IN ITS FIELD AFTER THE
MANNER OF THE COMMISSARIAT A L'ENERGIE ATOMIQUE SINCE
1945. UNQUOTE.

2. CONTEXT OF STATEMENT WAS INTERVIEW IN WHICH GIS-
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CARD DISCUSSED ECONOMIC GROWTH, THE NUCLEAR DEBATE,
THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE MINISTRY FOR CULTURE AND THE
ENVIRONMENT, AND ECOLOGICAL CONCERNS GENERALLY. IN
THE PART ON THE NUCLEAR DEBATE THE PRESIDENT NOTED
THAT THE GOF INTENDED TO PUSH NEW FORMS OF ENERGY
AS WELL AS AT THIS POINT TOLD HIS INTERVIEWER THAT
A SOLAR ENERGY AGENCY WAS BEING PLANNED, AS QUOTED

ABOVE.

3. EMBASSY SOURCES WHO WORK CLOSELY WITH GOF SOLAR ENERGY PROGRAMS TOLD EMBOFF JAN. 25 THAT THE STATEMENT SURPRISED THEM. THEIR VIEW IS THAT IT WOULD BE A LONG TIME BEFORE SUCH AN ORGANIZATION WOULD MAKE ANY

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN FRANCE'S ENERGY POLICY. IN ADDITION, CNRS SOLAR ENERGY R & D DIRECTOR INDICATED THAT AN EVALUATION WAS IN PROCESS HOW TO CONTINUE THE SOLAR PROGRAM MOST EFFECTIVELY AND PROVIDE THE ORGANIZATION WHICH WOULD ADEQUATELY EMPHASIZE THE UTILIZATION OF SOLAR ENERGY. FURTHER, THAT IT APPEARS A NEW AGENCY WILL BE NECESSARY, BUT THE ABOVE EVALUATION WILL ONLY BE COMPLETED IN MARCH AND AT PRESENT IT IS NOT CLEAR EITHER HOW OR WHEN THIS AGENCY WILL BE ORGANIZED.

4. COMMENT: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUOTE COMMISSARIAT UNQUOTE FOR A SOLAR ENERGY AGENCY, WITH THE IMPLICATION THAT SOLAR ENERGY IS WEIGHED AS HEAVILY AS ATOMIC ENERGY, WOULD BE AIMED AT ANTI-NUCLEAR PORTION OF PUBLIC OPINION. OUR ASSESSMENT IS THAT THERE WILL BE NO NEAR TERM SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON FRENCH ENERGY POLICY.

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